

27 August 17

## COUNTRY DIRECTORS' WEEKLY UPDATE

### 1. Key Meeting Takeaways.

- ★ **HCT** - A presentation about taxation issues of humanitarian actors in South Sudan was made at the HCT broadly covering issues around tax exemptions and customs clearance, PIT to state authorities, taxation of expatriate aid workers. *[See: Power point presentation attached]*
- ★ The HCT agreed with the recommendation to create a taskforce of technical experts from UNOCHA, UNDP, NGO Forum, Donors to draft a strategy and address the taxation issues with the south sudanese government. OCHA offered secretariat support to the taskforce and UNMISS legal advice unit will be included in the task force.
- ★ The representatives to the task force shall be constituted by tuesday 29th August 2017
- ★ The NGO Forum would need to send two representatives to the task force, preferably people with a finance and tax analysis background. CDs are encouraged to nominate staff from within their organisations with the aforementioned profile to [coordinator@southsudanngoforum.org](mailto:coordinator@southsudanngoforum.org)
- ★ **Ministry of Labour** - Members of INGO, NNGO steering committee and the secretariat were invited by the minister of labour, public service and human resource development (MoL) Lt Gen Gathoth Gatkuoth on 24th August 2017 to discuss issues regarding NGO staff recruitment and dismissal practices particularly around MoL involvement and due process, National government Vs state government involvement/interference in recruitments, policy harmonisation (NGO Act, Labour Act and circulars). The NGO representatives called for the minister's support in seeking clarification on the personal income tax issue and briefed the minister about the functions of the NGO Forum as well as addressed some common myths about NGOs such as the ratio of national staff vs expatriate staff working in NGOs which is about 90% (National staff) and 10% (international staff) as per NGO Forum membership statistics. The meeting was also attended by the deputy minister of labour, David Yau Yau and Director General of Labour, Nyengwi Livio Fulli. Some of the key takeaways include;
  - The NGO Secretariat will invite the director general to the Human resources working group meetings to share ideas and provide clarification on human resources policy issues affecting NGO actors.
  - The NGO secretariat will draft a letter addressed to the Ministry of finance and copied to the RRC and Ministry of labour highlighting the PIT issue and how it's affecting NGO operations which the minister will use to reinforce the issue at the council of ministers meeting.
  - The Ministry of Labour on request can provide a letter addressed to the state level ministry of labour along with RRC advising state officials not to interfere with NGO recruitment processes at state level.
  - The Director General of labour by invitation of the CDs can come to the CD monthly meeting to provide guidance on some labour issues pertinent to NGO operations.

## 2. Bureaucratic Impediments.

- ★ **Number Plates** - The RRC has engaged the ministry of transport in an effort to resolve the issue of traffic officers confiscating NGO number plates. The registrar general affirmed that the confiscated number plates will be returned to the respective NGOs and a letter/circular will be drafted by the ministry of transport which should address the problem disharmony in the number plate processing procedures between RRC and the ministry of transport.
- ★ **PIT** - The registrar general advised NGOs to comply with the circular drafted by the national level ministry of finance on 8th August 2017 regarding tax payment to Northern Leich state and keep all records of their tax remittances while RRC continues to engage with the ministry of finance to find a final solution.

## 3. Security.

The key risks to NGOs operating across South Sudan include (not in any priority):

- ★ Fighting can be expected to continue between SPLA and SPLA-IO at any time.
- ★ Cattle raiding and inter-communal fighting is prevalent - NGOs are not a direct target, but should take extra precautions.
- ★ Unexplained gunfire and broad daylight robberies affecting NGO staff are on a rise, particularly in Juba.
- ★ Continued warehouse / compound break-ins country-wide as people become more desperate for food and possibly fuel.
- ★ The general threat of ambushes and robberies on road movement remains high - in all areas.

### Highlights

**Juba:** crime appears to on the increase with reports of robberies and shootings in the night time. National staff members should be especially vigilant.

**Upper Nile:** There are an increasing number of reported incidents of inter-communal violence between Dinka and Mabanese ethnic groups around the 'Adar County' area including Paloich.

## 4. Information / communications.

- **Labour Rates Outside the POCs Survey.** All agencies providing services in this areas should participate here (<https://goo.gl/forms/ju4D0fyQtDMGUCOX2>). The survey is intended to contribute to the OCHA database in the three categories of workers (Unskilled, Semi-skilled and Skilled human resources).
- **New website has been launched.** Please continue to review and share your feedback with the Information Manager through the email address, [Infomgr@southsudannngoforum.org](mailto:Infomgr@southsudannngoforum.org) so that necessary improvements may be made.

## 5. Training.

- **Security training:** the next SSAFE training is planned for 29-31 Aug - attendees have been notified.

## **6. Secretariat Staff Issues / Movements.**

- The Deputy SFP will be on leave from 25 Aug - 17 Sep.
- The Security Analyst will return from leave on Monday 28 Aug.
- Secretariat Director will be on R&R and leave from 12 Aug - 11 Sep. In his absence, Hafeez Wani, the NNGO FP will be the Acting Director.

## **7. Forward Look.**

- NGO Forum security cell is working on a guidebook for NGOs that will act as a guidance document for humanitarian safety in the context. First draft that will be shared with NGO security staff in the next couple of weeks to allow for feedback and input into the process before a final draft is released.
- Every Thursday at 13:15 hours, HCT representatives for the NGOs hold a pre-meeting to which all NGOs are welcome. Come and make your voices and concerns heard.
- Elections for Steering Committee members for the period October 2017 to September 2018 will be held on October 6. All positions except for Host Agency will be up for elections. We continue to receive self-nominations from members, including from current Steering Committee members.

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